



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Feature Article - Marine Farming Planning Act

This Act, passed by the Tasmanian Parliament in 1995, regulates marine farms in Tasmanian waters and supersedes various provisions of the Fisheries Act 1959 (Tas). As a consequence of the marine farm industry's rapid growth in Tasmania in the 1980s the Fisheries Act became irrelevant.

One of the features of the new Act is a mechanism for the establishment of marine farms, and the obligations of proponents to inform the local community with a detailed draft plan.

It is now mandatory to have an assessment of the environmental impact together with proposals to mitigate against any undesirable features of the proposed development.

The draft plan and comments are reviewed by an expert panel who make recommendations to the Fisheries Minister.

The Act also establishes a Board of Advice and Reference to assess the best method of allocation of prospective marine farms, and assess who is the best person to be granted a lease. The objective of this provision of the Act is to ensure that developments that take place are also in the best interest of Tasmania. The Act has provision for bonds, paid by the leaseholder, to ensure that lease sites are properly maintained. There is also a demerit point system similar to that which operates on Tasmania's roads, to increase the powers of enforcement of the provisions of the Act.

Source: Tasmanian Fishing Industry Council, Fishing Today, Hobart, June/July 1995.

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